

## **“Dark West”**

In 1871, during the heyday of the Wild West, I worked as a sheriff's deputy in the town of Gutter Splat. My name is Todd Fredstone and I moved to Gutter Splat when work dried up in the northeast. Gutter Splat has a mayor and of course some law enforcement, but the man that truly runs the town is Kane McLeash. Kane McLeash is one of the richest oil barons in the good old US of A. Kane McLeash may have all the money and power around here, but he couldn't control everything.

That being, time. What makes Gutter Splat such an odd place here in the west is that time hasn't really moved forward nor backward. Like we're in a loop. Stranger still, we have travelers not from out of state or out of town, but out of time. We have Roman gladiators drinking in the saloon and dinosaurs stealing cattle. In fact, one of my friends is a monk from the dark ages, who, like many travelers in our town, only wants to return home.

One day, when I was doing my morning patrol. The sheriff and I were summoned to the hillside manor of Kane McLeash because he claimed his daughter was kidnaped by a man in the strangest clothes he'd ever seen. The sheriff and I went into the desert to investigate McLeash's daughter's whereabouts, but not before encountering some Indians. The Indians believed in some prophecy that a man in a black robe had told them. The Indians ordered that I go with them, and the sheriff to return to town. The sheriff and I did what we were told to do. While the sheriff and the other residents of Gutter Splat dealt with two huge T-Rexes.

Once I arrived at the Indian village, they introduced me to a man I would never forget. This man was named Fizillo and he was a wizard from the middle ages. Fizillo told me that the man who kidnaped McLeash's daughter was a man from the year 2154. The man from the future was Kevin Dash, and he was a soldier ordered to fix the time space continuum.

This made me mighty confused, but he also gave me a magical sword. Once I held the sword, I was transformed into a new chap. I became a powerful magical black knight. I felt more powerful than King Arthur himself. “So, where can I find Mr.

Dash?" I asked. "Go to the silver mines, but know this, Kevin is not your true enemy, there is another," said Fizillo. I was confused by that, but because time was of the essence, I headed to the Gutter Splat silver mines. On my way to the mines, I battled many robots and dinosaurs. After making my way to the mines, I saw McLeash's daughter tied up and Mr. Dash holding her at gunpoint. I jumped off my horse and rushed over to attack Mr. Dash, but then I froze in place. "Who are you?" asked Kevin Dash. I kept moving and Mr. Dash laughed. He showed off a very fancy watch. "You see this, this lets me control time. Top government scientists built this. Now, answer these questions, who are you and where's the crystal?" asked Kevin Dash. "My name is Dark West," I cried as I managed to break free from control of Kevin's device. Kevin shot his gun at me, but I used my sword to dodge all his bullets.

We fought for a long time until McLeash's daughter screamed "I know where the crystal is!". Kevin and I both turned around. McLeash's daughter explained that her father had the crystal and that's why time has been disrupted in Gutter Splat. Kevin and I agreed to team up as we headed to McLeash's manor. When we arrived at McLeash's manor, McLeash was prepared for us. "I won't let you ruin everything that I built!" yelled Kane McLeash. Kevin pulled out his gun and I my sword as we demanded to know where the crystal was. Kane, being the stubborn man he was, wouldn't budge. Kevin shot him in the foot. But before we could do anything else, McLeash's daughter had the crystal in her hands. "Sarah, no! Put that back in the vault," yelled an angry Kane. "Sorry father, but the universe is at stake, Kevin, Mr. West, follow me," said Sarah.

Sarah McLeash and I rode on our horses while Kevin Dash rode on a fancy futuristic hover bike. Sarah led us to the silver mines where she showed us a cave within the mines where the crystal was found. Out of nowhere, Fizillo appeared and Sarah, almost like instinct, handed the crystal to Fizillo. "Ah yes, time to put you back in your place. Thanks for returning the time crystal to its home. Once placed here, the time stream will be restored," said Fizillo. Fizillo dusted off an ancient podium and placed the time crystal inside it. Once returned, the silver mines lit up as the time space continuum was being restored.

Soon all the dinosaurs, robots, barbarians, pirates, knights, and Roman gladiators disappeared from Gutter Splat. Sarah, Kevin, and I fled the mines as order was being restored. Kevin began to tinker with his watch as he stared at Sarah and I. "It's funny, I'm actually a descendant of the McLeash family. We're related Sarah by many centuries. I'm just bummed I couldn't meet my very, very, very, great grandfather Todd Fredstone who lived here around this time. Thanks for your help. I hope we won't meet again," said Kevin Dash. Kevin Dash saluted Sarah and I as he slowly faded away as he returned to the year 2154. Then I realized that I had just met a future descendant of mine who happened to be a very, very great grandson. He also said he was related to the McLeash family as well? Could it be that there's more in store for Sarah and me? Only time will tell. But, for now, as the sheriff's deputy, I had a town to protect. Even though the time stream was restored, I still have the sword Fizillo gave me, so if Gutter Splat ever needs Dark West again, he can come back at any time!